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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 04-29-2014 BY ADG/J75J65T61

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Officials Mum, But Probe Russ Defector's Death

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Page A-3

"The Register",
Santa Ana, Calif.

By RAY McHUGH

Chief, Washington Bureau
Copley News Service

WASHINGTON—A chorus of "no comment" is beginning to shroud a Senate investigation into the strange life and death of a young Russian defector.

"We do not comment on executive (closed) session business," said Jay Sourwine, the elephant-like general counsel of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

Did this mean that the Subcommittee was continuing to probe the case of Sergei Kourdakov?

"No comment," said Sourwine.

Kourdakov, 21, was killed Jan. 1 in Running Spring, Calif., motel when a revolver he was handling discharged. San Bernardino County authorities have

ruled accidental death. Federal authorities agree in private statements.

It has been learned, however, that members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, particularly Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., still plan to review Kourdakov's personal papers—particularly notes, memoranda and tape recordings—concerning his life in the Soviet Union and his experiences in Canada and the United States since Sept. 3, 1971 when he leaped from a Soviet fishing trawler off the coast of British Columbia and somehow survived a 10-hour ordeal in the stormy Pacific to ask political asylum.

He had been scheduled to testify before the Internal Security Subcommittee late in January.

Kourdakov, orphaned at the age of four, was reared in So-

viet state schools in Siberia. He studied at naval academies in Leningrad and Vladivostok and was commissioned an ensign in 1971. He served as a radio-radar operator aboard Soviet warships and fishing vessels.

After gaining political asylum in Canada with the help of Russian emigrant groups, the likeable, exuberant young Kourdakov became a popular speaker at Russian Orthodox and Fundamentalist churches in Canada.

It was this exposure that brought him to the United States last July under the sponsorship of the Evangelical Center of Glendale, Calif. Kourdakov spoke at approximately 20 church meetings on behalf of the center's underground evangelism program which raises

funds to distribute Bibles and other religious materials clandestinely inside Communist countries.

Despite Sourwine's stance, other Senate sources disclosed that San Bernardino sheriff's officers have brought all of Kourdakov's papers to Washington. The sources said the officers reviewed the shooting incident with subcommittee investigators and turned over all the documents. Russian language specialists were to begin examining the material Thursday. The shooting incident was described as "closed."

James Lucier, a former aide of Sen. Thurmond who is now on the staff of Sen. Helms, R-S.C., confirmed that Kourdakov was preparing a memorandum at the request of Thurmond. He said he could not

comment on its contents.

Dr. Victor Fediay, a Senate Soviet specialist, arranged the Russian Orthodox funeral for the defector last week at St. John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church in Exile and burial in the Russian section of Rock Creek Park Cemetery.

Fediay disclosed in an interview that the funeral arrangements were marred by several threatening Russian language telephone calls to St. John's pastor the Rev. Nicholas Petakoros. "The callers complained that Sergei was not a Christian," Fediay said. "One called him a Communist. Another said 'that kind of person' should not be buried in a Christian cemetery."

Special police protection was provided at the services, but there was no interference. Fe-

diay discounted any involvement by Soviet diplomatic personnel in Washington. He said he believed the calls came from "over-zealous persons" who were perhaps influenced by growing competition between anti-Communist evangelical church groups.

The Rev. Richard Wurmbbrand, a victim of Communist prosecution in Romania and a former colleague of Bass in the Evangelical Center, has been openly critical of Kourdakov's activities. Pastor Wurmbbrand complained that the young Russian had not had enough experience in Christian society, to speak out on social and spiritual values.

Suggestions that Kourdakov was still a Communist or a

Date: 1/19/73

Edition:

Author: Ray McHugh

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: Los Angeles

☐ Being Investigated

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Soviet agent at the time of his death have been dismissed as fanciful. The naval officer was thoroughly debriefed, interrogated and investigated first by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, then Canadian Intelligence Officers and finally by Americans associated with the FBI, the CIA and Military Intelligence.

One of Kourdakov's closest friends was Assistant Secretary of Defense John Broger, himself a veteran of anti-Communist religious broadcasting in the Far East.

A complete intelligence clearance was necessary, friends point out, before Kourdakov could have been sponsored in Congress for a permanent resident visa in the United States. Such an application was made in the closing days of the 92nd Congress by Rep. Earl Langrebe, R-Ind., and Sen. Everett Jordan, D-S.C. Congress adjourned before action could be taken, but Langrebe had indicated in late December that he was ready to re-submit the application. Kourdakov was reportedly working on official visa papers for the Immigration and Naturalization Service at the time of his death.

The case has focused attention on the rivalry between various evangelical groups who are trying to penetrate the Iron Curtain. Many of them are headquartered in Southern California, but carry on religious activities and fund-raising operations throughout the free world.

Bass has expressed concern that Kourdakov's death might be used by some in an attempt to discredit the evangelical movement.

"This was a fine, young man who felt he had a mission to help bring a better life to his fellow men in the Soviet Union," Bass said in an interview. "He was impetuous, full of the joy of living, but he also realized he had a unique opportunity. His death is more than a personal loss. It is a loss to Christians everywhere."

In the first days following the shooting incident, Bass and other close friends of Kourdakov were openly suspicious that foul play might have been involved. Today there seems to be general acceptance of the official sheriff's and coroner's verdicts of accidental death.

The suspicions of foul play were based on Kourdakov's own accounts to Canadian authorities of three attempts by alleged Soviet Agents to threaten him while he was in that country. At the funeral, Eugene Klar of Toronto confirmed that Sergei had been told by a suspected KGB agent to "Stop talking or you'll have an accident and it will be the last accident you ever have."

Klar said he took Kourdakov into his home for several months "to protect him." The Canadian is a lay leader in that country's Russian Orthodox Church and helped involve the defector in religious activities.

It was Kourdakov's fear of Soviet agents that led to his possession of the revolver that killed him. Bass and friends in Washington had dissuaded him from carrying a weapon, but during the Christmas holidays he persuaded a California friend to loan him the gun.

"It was a tragedy that even here in the United States he could not forget his past," said Sen. Harold Hughes, D-Iowa, who added: "I was very impressed with this young man."

Kourdakov had made scores of friends in Washington's government and military circles during brief visits to the Capitol through the auspices of Fellowship House, an inter-denominational Christian center. Many of them were among the 200 who attended his funeral.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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DATE 08-20-2014 BY ADG/J75J65T61

F B I

Date: 1/24/73

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via AIRTEL AIR MAIL
(Priority)

TO: ACTING DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED]
FROM: SAC, LOS ANGELES [REDACTED] (P)
SUBJECT: SERGEI NIKOLAY KOURDAKOV, aka
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OO: Los Angeles

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Re Los Angeles airtel to Bureau 1/15/73.

Enclosed for the Bureau and Washington Field Office (WFO), is one (1) copy each of a newspaper article concerning subject which appeared in "The Register" newspaper of Santa Ana, California, on 1/19/73.

On 1/17/73, Detective [REDACTED] San Bernardino County, California, Sheriff's Office, (SBSO), stated he interviewed [REDACTED] of the Underground Evangelism group, 1222 Glendale Boulevard, Glendale, California, on 1/16/73. [REDACTED] was born [REDACTED] and is described as a white male, [REDACTED] tall, [REDACTED] pounds, and he resides at [REDACTED] La Canada, California. [REDACTED] was born on [REDACTED] brought his own tape recorder and recorded the interview. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] was non-committal about his religious group and would not state whether or not he was an actual minister. [REDACTED] denied the existence of a reported tape recording on which [REDACTED] stated she was not in the room when subject shot himself.

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2 - Washington Field (Enc. 1)
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Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

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[redacted] advised that he had attempted unsuccessfully to reach JOHN BROGER at telephone number (202) OX7-6125, in the Washington, D. C., area. [redacted] stated BROGER supposedly recommended the subject to Congressman EARL LANGREBE, so that the subject would be granted entry into the United States.

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[redacted] feels that an interview of BROGER is desirable to determine his interest in the subject and the Underground Evangelism group, how he met the subject, and whether or not he was speaking for his agency when he recommended the subject to Congressman LANGREBE. Los Angeles feels that an interview of BROGER is warranted as part of our inquiry to verify the nature of any threats that may have been made against the subject by the Soviets. [redacted] stated he was advised by Congressman LANGREBE that BROGER had subject's body examined in Washington, D. C., and BROGER was satisfied that subject had shot himself. [redacted] added that Coroner [redacted], San Bernardino County, learned that BROGER wanted to forget the whole matter concerning the subject.

[redacted] advised that subject's manuscripts were retained in Washington, D. C., for further examination and were in the care of Special Agent [redacted] of the Sub-Committee on Internal Affairs.

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According to [redacted] an inquest will be held by the San Bernardino County Coroner [redacted] in mid-February to clear up the death of subject, as far as possible. Both [redacted] and [redacted] have requested that the Bureau contact

[redacted], and request [redacted] to contact the SBSO in order to verify details concerning [redacted] and to discuss the possibility of having [redacted]

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[redacted] appear and testify at the inquest. Coroner [redacted] has also inquired if it would be possible for the Special Agents of the FBI who interviewed subject in Washington, D. C., to appear and testify at the inquest if necessary. [redacted] was interested in determining to what extent Special Agents of the FBI could testify regarding facts in subject's background and concerning statements made by the subject.

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On 1/24/73, [REDACTED] advised that the coroner's inquest regarding subject's death is tentatively scheduled for 2/20/73. [REDACTED] stated he was advised by a letter from Congressman EARL F. LANGREBE that the Congressman had asked the FBI to investigate the Underground Evangelism movement. [REDACTED] stated Congressman LANGREBE was unhappy with [REDACTED] because he (LANGREBE), had apparently given a speech for the Evangelist group in Indiana on 7/23/72. [REDACTED] added that he had notified the Internal Revenue Service and the California Tax Franchise Board regarding the Underground Evangelism group and he anticipated that these agencies will make an inquiry concerning this Evangelism group as to possible fraudulent activities. [REDACTED] pointed out that in one month the subject made \$16,000 on a speaking tour for the Underground Evangelism group of which the subject received ten percent.

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[REDACTED] stated that in his opinion, JOHN BROGER is the individual who originally contacted various Congressmen concerning the circumstances surrounding subject's death.

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REQUEST OF BUREAU

The Bureau is requested to contact RCMP liaison and present the request of the SBSO, as set out above.

It is also requested that the Bureau comment on the availability and extent to which Special Agents who had personal contact with the subject will be able to testify at the coroner's inquest, if necessary.

LEADS

WASHINGTON FIELD

WFO, WASHINGTON, D. C.: It is noted that the enclosed newspaper clipping describes JOHN BROGER as the Assistant Secretary of Defense and one of subject's closest friends. WFO is requested to interview BROGER along the

*Suggesting J. Lee FISEL telephonically advised
1/25/73, who is to contact Broger.
Confirming A/T Coming*

[REDACTED]

guidelines set out above provided no information is available or received from the Bureau which would preclude the advisability of the interview. If interviewed, in addition to the above items, BROGER should be questioned concerning any knowledge he may have of any specific threats that may have been made against subject's life.

LOS ANGELES

AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA: Will maintain contact with SBSO regarding any developments in this matter.

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Date: 3/12/73

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via AIRTEL AIR MAIL (REGISTERED)
(Priority)

TO: ACTING DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED]
FROM: SAC, LOS ANGELES [REDACTED] (P)
RE: SERGEI NIKOLAY KOURDAKOV, aka
IS-R
OO: Los Angeles

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Re Los Angeles teletype to Bureau dated 2/23/73;
and Los Angeles airtel to Bureau dated 1/24/73 (copy to WFO).

Enclosed for information of Bureau is a copy
of an article appearing in the Sun Telegram Newspaper,
San Bernardino, California, setting out results of the
coroner's inquest at San Bernardino on 3/1/73, in which
the jury ruled that subject accidentally shot himself.
The nature of the "New Evidence" referred to by Congressman
EARL LANDGREBE is also explained.

On 3/7/73, Coroner [REDACTED] San Bernardino County,
advised that the manuscripts in subject's possession at the
time of his death are still in Washington, D.C. in the care
of Chief Investigator [REDACTED] of Senator STROM THURMOND's
Subcommittee on Internal Security. He stated [REDACTED] can be
reached at the New Senate Office Building, telephone number
225-8247. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] told him that the manuscripts
of the subject dealt with a story he was writing contained no
information of an internal security nature. HILL stated the
manuscripts are supposed to be returned to him sometime in the
future. He stated the nature of the manuscripts could be
verified through [REDACTED]

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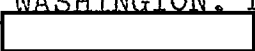
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Special Agent in Charge



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LEAD

WASHINGTON FIELD

AT WASHINGTON, D.C.: It is requested that Chief Investigator  above, be contacted in order to verify that subject's manuscripts contained no information of a security or intelligence nature.

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*Don't cover lead Bureau
Sending Airtel -*

SAC, Los Angeles [REDACTED]

4/3/73

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Acting Director, FBI [REDACTED]

✓
SERGEI NIKOLAY KOURDAKOV, aka
IS - R

Reurnirtel 3/12/73.

Bureau does not desire to have WFO contact the Chief Investigator for the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security to determine the contents of a manuscript which was in the possession of the subject at the time of his death. Any such inquiry which Coroner [REDACTED] of San Bernardino County desires to have made should be made by his office and not by the Bureau.

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② - WFO

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